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415 The shape of these water jugs varies considerably according to the region, and some of them even seem to us to be characteristic of certain ethnic groups. [145]

Among the western Bateke and Banfumungu, the spherical shape with straight neck predominates.

Among the Maboma of Bokala-Wombali and the eastern Banfumungu, the shape is distinctly spherical, with a very small, funnel-like neck that is usually no more than one or two centimeters high. This form is entirely new. Fortunately, we were able to collect several specimens. The Bateke of the Stanley Pool region use a water jug that resembles the carafes imported from Europe. This shape is particularly common in the Leopoldville-Kinshasa region.

[53] From Mushie to the region of the Basakata-Baleia, including the Wadia and Tumba, the body of the water jug consists of two parts joined at a sharp or slightly rounded edge. The bottom part is shaped like a spherical calotte; the upper part has the shape of a truncated cone. The decoration is very symmetrical. Lightly marked parallel circles cover the conical part of the body and sometimes the neck. The latter is very long, usually wider at its base than at the top and slightly swollen in the middle. This interesting shape is also found, though more rarely, among the Mosengere. Among this tribe we encountered another form, no less interesting and very little known up to the present time. The chief characteristics of this form are the flat bottom, a cylindrical, more or less symmetrical body, rounded edges, and a neck in the shape of a wide funnel.

Among the Bokale of the northeast, the Baleia-Bateke, the Ipanga-Batitu, and the Bokala-Yaelima, the water jug has a spherical body and a straight neck. This same shape is also found among the Bankutu (Wankutulu) and Basongo-Meno of the Beni Dikale-Kole region.

Let us note, however, that in the region of the Ipanga-Yaelima, water jugs are relatively rare; the natives commonly use large calabashes, very often provided with a handle and a leg of rattan or bamboo.

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• 515 Other than with meals, the natives drink water only to slake their thirst. Each time the porters come to a river, they make it a point to bathe in it and to refresh themselves. [146]

Care of the Body

Hygiene. -- Soap making. -- Ngula and mpembe. -- Artificial deformations. -- Depilation. -- Filing the teeth. -- Hairdos. -- Ornaments and objects suspended from the body. -- Tattooing by incision. -- Circumcision [Ed., the author does not discuss circumcision in this volume].

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356 A person who has only limited contact with the natives tends to depict them as very careless in their grooming, ignorant of the principles of hygiene and cleanliness, and, we may say, even as foul and filthy. If, however, one has an opportunity for closer contact with these primitives, he quickly realizes the inaccuracy of these judgments which are based on hasty and superficial observation. In closely studying the native's customs, in watching him in his daily, ordinary life, one notices many small things which show us [164] that the native, apparently heedless of all hygienic measures and inattentive to cleanliness, does take into account rudimentary principles of hygiene and tries to apply them in many small ways.

At first glance the native hut looks like a miserable hovel. Its often dilapidated appearance, narrow and low entrance, lack of windows or ventilating shaft, the general disorder reigning in the area which is used as shelter, kitchen, etc., all are reasons for the unpleasant impression acquired from a rapid investigation. The native, however, puts a great deal of care into the construction of his dwelling. The woman works hard at cleaning the inside of her hut regularly. If, pushing our investigation further, we proceed to the area reserved for the husband and wife and closely study the organization and arrangement of what serves as the bedroom, we see that a cleanliness reigns here that stands in conspicuous contrast to the unpleasant first impression. The

356 walls are lined with mats, and the crude bed is raised off the ground to avoid unpleasant and unhealthy contact with the ground. A mat is spread over the native's bed, [165] and the pillow which is customarily used permits him to lie in a restful position.

• 55 The natives take a bath almost every day. They usually go to the river during the hottest hours of the day, but sometimes they do so early in the morning or in the evening. The child participates in this from an early age. Aside from these regular baths, the native often washes his whole body with warm water. 007 He then smears himself with a light film of palm oil to ensure the suppleness of the skin and to protect it from the sun's rays.

24 Before and after each meal the native makes a point of washing out his mouth. After the meal he brushes his teeth with 575 a small brush made of rattan or soft wood, the fibers acting as



Fig. 91. A Scene from Native Life among the Riparian People of the Lower Lukanle.

bristles.

253 Meals are prepared with a genuine concern for cleanliness. 244 All the food is washed, cleaned, and boiled before being eaten. Kitchen utensils are cleaned and carefully put away. Despite the primitive conditions for preparing manioc flour, the product is as pure as if it had been prepared by an improved method

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264 with modern machinery. Not content with the state of the utensils in which she serves the meals, the woman is careful to line them at mealtime with fresh and very clean leaves.

• 575 The natives keep the nails of their hands and feet cut short.

The care of the feet is explained as a hygienic measure and by the necessity of taking precautions to avoid the vermin which like to get into these places (ticks). The care of the hands can be explained only by the concern for cleanliness shown in native eating habits.

Imported soap is not yet commonly used, although we found it in a number of native huts.

387 Many native women know how to make soap. The process is very simple. Dried banana skins, trunks of papaw trees, bark, the fruits of various vegetables, and waste from palm nuts are gathered together and burned. The ashes are carefully collected and mixed with some water for boiling them. At the first ebullition, the woman removes the ashes and impurities that [166] rise to the surface. Boiling is then continued until the evaporation is almost complete. When only a thick and sticky grayish-black deposit is left, the woman takes it off the fire, washes it, and kneads it in cold water until it takes on a clearer color. She then adds palm oil, mixes it in with great care, and puts the lot back on the fire. The paste is stirred all through the boiling, which is continued until the woman obtains a mixture whose consistency is slightly firmer than that of our soft soaps. [Ed., a passage is omitted from mid-page 166 to mid-page 167.]

Native soap is used only in the case of the body.

(302)
393 [167] The native does not merely smear his body with palm oil. The men and especially the women often powder themselves with takula dust. The women prepare a cosmetic with this and love to cover their whole body with it in a spirit of coquetry. This practice is so widespread among the peoples of Lake Leopold II that the manufacture of opula has become a veritable local industry in certain areas. This is especially true of the Mounghere. In a village near the Banga post, we counted 25 installations for making opula powder. The simplest set of materials includes two blocks of takula or redwood, a small receptacle containing water, a handful of sand, and a small hand or painting brush. One of the

291 embarrassed by the glances of others. This feeling extends even to
834 other parts of the body which, irrespective of the degree of culture
they have reached, most peoples try to cover. [55]

2) Between persons of the same sex and age a certain freedom
is permitted. This may be observed especially among young boys
when they have to urinate. In our countries of Europe the situation is
no different. I must say, however, that I have only noticed this
freedom in the schools and never in the villages of the interior. Is
there a gap in my observations, or should this laxity in the schools be
attributed to the influence of the law of least effort (the suitable
places in the schools are at some distance) and to the lack of leisure
available to the pupils given the shortness of recreation periods on
the one hand and their love of play on the other? It is also possible
that among these boys modesty has barely made its appearance, since
this feeling is strongly linked to the sexual instinct and awakens only
with the latter. It would also seem that living in a group tends to
reduce the power of modesty.

3) It is obvious that sexual excitement runs counter to modesty
and that sometimes -- especially among young people -- immodest
acts may be used to arouse another person, especially in situations,
such as bathing, which lend themselves easily to such actions.

4) Bathers, whether washing or swimming, are very careless,
especially when they are in a group of their own sex and age. In
former times no doubt they did not indulge in the luxury of even a
rudimentary bathing costume. But at the present time it is not at all
difficult for them to obtain the small piece of cloth needed for that
purpose. Nevertheless, nude bathing in rivers and streams is a com-
mon practice. It is far more frequent among women than among
men. The natives with whom I have discussed the subject attribute
this fact to levity and a lack of concern; but they see nothing very
wrong in it. Whether or not [56] the bathers are in a group also
seems to make a difference. If you surprise one or two people under
such circumstances, they will hide in haste. If, on the other hand,
you find a dozen, they will not move; on the contrary, they will
interrupt their toilette to watch you pass. Perhaps they are simply
concerned about their nakedness. But it is also possible that they

are reassured by the fact that they are in a group, so that no one feels singled out by the gaze of the passer-by. Washing away from major streams is always surrounded by more propriety. For this purpose a small enclosure (ikomba) is built behind the hut or among the banana trees, or a small thicket is allowed to grow there. By this means the native is sheltered from indiscreet glances if he wants to take a bath or give himself an enema. As a matter of fact these things are done preferably after dark.

5) Violent anger or sorrow drown out modesty, just as they momentarily destroy the use of reason and suppress all feelings which are contradictory or simply different. In this situation, too, the man shows himself superior to the woman. He is less impulsive, calmer, less prone to lose control of his actions, to be carried away by his anger. Thus he almost never strips himself bare. The woman, on the other hand, readily strips off all her clothing. This behavior is extremely common; a woman undresses completely whenever she experiences great sorrow or intense anger. Luckily for propriety's sake some friend or relative always hastens to cover at least the essential parts. For a woman who throws off her clothing exposes herself to the mockery and jest of spectators. (1)

1. An angry woman may also undress to shame her husband; it is a way of insulting and mocking him.

6) The Nimdu practice sexual intercourse only at night. I believe that this custom is due to their sense of propriety, [57] supplemented by a superstitious explanation which will be described in detail in Article V.

7) The sense of modesty has its fullest expression in relation to parents, brothers, sisters, etc. Thus it is unheard of that a son should see his mother naked; mina fignid founv avangd. If an adult daughter is ill and requires personal care (such as an enema, for example), the father has to take care of her himself if no other female relative is near by. But their sense of modesty is such that they both shed tears over the event. As a matter of fact this situation

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It goes without saying that the feeling of sexual modesty and its various manifestations among these people are being transformed by two different currents. On the one hand, their moral laxity is increased by their contact with all sorts of other peoples, by a greater freedom, by the partial emancipation of women, and by the attraction of the large centers and their luxury. On the other hand, there is the preaching of Christian morality, although its effects are still very slight and certainly do not counterbalance the influences mentioned above.

Article II. Preparation for Sexual Life

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1. The Woman's preparation

[824]

When a girl wishes to indulge in pleasures of the flesh, she prepares her sexual organs in advance. The preparation itself consists of "opening the way" (lifola mboka). This operation, which is repeated several times, is performed in hiding, preferably in the forest. The girl may or may not have companions with her who share her intentions. Each girl operates on herself. In order to gradually enlarge the organ, a girl uses progressively thicker shoots of the bokasho or bokasho plant (Cotus afer), making sure first to remove the tip. Later these shoots are replaced by the lambold fruit of the bokasho plant (Aframomum) or, more infrequently, by a young manioc tuber.

This is the general practice; exceptions are few or nonexistent. It is followed because the girls want the event to which they aspire to occur without difficulty (hifola hifola).

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In addition to this basic preparation, girls [83] also wash the private part of their bodies. This is a cleanliness measure which they continue to practice save in exceptional cases for the rest of their lives. According to my informants, the native woman -- as a very general rule -- stresses this cleanliness as much for herself as for the sake of not repelling her husband or lover. When a girl begins to practice this personal hygiene, it is a sign that she wants to begin her sexual life.

83 which has a strong resemblance to sleeping sickness. (1) One of its
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1. It is not sleeping sickness itself, however, for that disease seems formerly to have been unknown in this area.

symptoms is a weakness of the lower limbs. Instances are cited of individuals who were unable to resist their passions and were punished in this manner. Apparently only the woman dies. As soon as her family discovers that she is stricken, the guilty woman denounces her accomplice. The latter is held responsible and is required to pay a heavy indemnity, which may amount to several dozen copper rings.

83 Here as in many other situations the Nkundu have found a way
751 to avoid the danger. There is an antidote (menge), and it is water (hisi hale menge de bombile). Thus those who are unable to control their aroused passions during the day, satisfy it in a shallow stream.

83 The fear of bombile has been greatly shaken [93] by coloniza-
773 tion. If we are to believe the natives, foreign soldiers are responsible for this change also. But the behavior of the latter could not completely destroy the ancient feeling, probably due to a natural shame which makes them seek darkness and privacy for acts of this sort.

83 After intercourse a native woman usually gives herself a douche.
753 She does so for the sake of cleanliness. It often happens, however,
773 that she does not wait long enough before doing so, and thus she neutralizes the effect of the intercourse. This is chiefly a matter of carelessness. Nevertheless, under certain circumstances she may use this means to prevent conception. (1)

1. See Chapter X, Article 1, 2.

83 According to my informants, some women have constitutional
726 abnormalities which repel men. As everything readily becomes public, such flaws are quickly known after marriage, though not quite as readily beforehand. Actually love can -- and often does -- cause them to be overlooked. But after the first ardor has cooled, such a situation may become a threat to the stability of a marriage. When quarrels

77^a She does no work in the farm or kitchen. She always has an ebúsa to wait on her. If her family has no member they can let her have, she will borrow an ebúsa from a distant relative or a friend.

[42] A nkundú does not travel on foot; she is carried in a hammock (hunting net). Her husband accompanies her on foot, however. But [52] this was done only for a true nkundú of a rich man, and the custom is disappearing today.

A favorite may not leave her husband, even to go and see her parents. In the past some men were so jealous of their favorites that they would not allow them to satisfy even their most private needs unless they themselves or some sentinel (usually a Botwá) stood watch. A man could not even go into the vicinity of her hut, which is built just behind the husband's shed. For although the husband is sometimes tolerant of the passions of his other wives, he always shows [72] an intransigent jealousy [346] in relation to his favorite. He never travels without having her accompany him.

● [55] The favorite has the honor of performing small personal services for her husband; she cuts his hair, helps him in the removal of body hair, scratches his pustules from ringworm or prickly heat, anoints him with oil, pains him with ngúla, and, in a word, performs all the tasks connected with his appearance and hygiene.

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76^a Out of love for his favorite, her husband can buy her corpse for the price of a slave (in kind or in money). By doing so he obtains the right to have it buried beside his own while those of the other wives must be buried with their native clans. That is why in some regions a husband calls his favorite his ikundaka (from kunda "to bury"). Nevertheless, if her husband dies before she does, his heirs may not trouble themselves about his wishes and no longer require that the favorite be buried in their cemetery. That is what happened to Bongúla of Bongúli, whose husband Ikilinganya of Bongangú (Bokundú) had paid the price of two slaves for this right. When the husband has [124] killed large game, the favorite, like the bandúsa, has the right to receive her personal predetermined portion (bandúsa). Her part is the neck or a chop, which in her absence, goes to the sons or their wives. The other wives do not have the same right; each one obtains only an ordinary piece (ikundú).

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● 515 In order to facilitate the flowing out of all the blood, the mother is given hot baths. However, they are not begun before noon, for the Nkundó say that in the morning and evening it is too cool and the blood is not sufficiently fluid. Those who have been [17] in greater contact with the Whites give the mother beer or wine to drink. The hot baths are administered behind the hut in an enclosure set up for the occasion. They are of two kinds: baths by sprinkling (bompúlowá mbáomba) and steam baths (bompúlo w'élíngé). For the first method [485] very hot water is used, and by using a bunch of palms, the woman's abdomen, loins, and ribs are sprinkled. In the second method a pit is dug and large leaves (or a basin) containing boiling water are placed in it. Three or four strong, wide sticks are placed on top, and the woman is seated on them. She is wrapped in several mats to which, today, one or two blankets are added. She is left thus exposed to the action of the steam for several minutes. According to the natives, it is the ideal system because it makes all the blood come out, or almost all. Some people first give a sprinkle bath, and then follow it with a steam bath; others are satisfied with one or the other, depending on the circumstances. In any case more than one bath is never given in one day. This care may be given for one or two weeks, or it may stop after two or three days. The effect of "civilizing" is more inclined to the latter. But no Nkundó would want to omit the baths, for the woman's life is at stake.

After the bath the woman is carefully rubbed and dried, [301] and then anointed with oil mixed with red paint.

From time to time, usually every second day, she is given a douche.

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As long as the mother remains weak, a large fire is maintained in her hut to keep her warm, and the doors are closed by means of palms. The husband and his relatives fetch the firewood. But the first log must be cut and brought by the husband who, to use the Nkundó expression, must "remove the violence" (ímola ífíndé). In the beginning the woman lies down on a bofínga right near the fire. She turns the front of her body toward it. The fire plays a great rôle in her quick recovery. She is very well cared

THE NKUMU OF THE TUMBA

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no compulsion. If one of the contracting parties fails to fulfil its pledges in this matter of giving part of the kill, or in anything else, the aggrieved party may call the council together. This consists not only of members of the *molambi* and *skope*, but of all elders of the village or villages connected with this particular one. The party judged in the wrong, whether *skope* or *molambi*, will be fined, the injured party receiving its share, and both parties will be charged to live together harmoniously and observe their contracts. 224
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The power of the *skumu* was apparently limited, and did not supersede that of the *momem molambi*. When trials came up, the aggrieved party might go either to the *momem molambi* or to the *skumu*. If it was necessary to call the village elders together about it, both these authorities were present at the hearing. First the young men of the group were allowed to give their verdict, then the old men, after that *momem molambi* (or the *molambi e shi*), and finally the *skumu* was given the privilege of the last word. He would comment on the opinions of each of the judges, criticizing one young man, commending another, and then giving his own verdict, at which the group would assent by saying, 'Even so, grandfather'. The whole group of judges would then fix the fines, a double portion of which went to the *skumu*. 624
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The actual manual labour which an *skumu* may do excludes anything endangering life or limb, or requiring agility and speed. He may clear the bush for his gardens: this is a man's work. He may take part in the building of his houses, but may do no high work, and, among the inland groups, it is the work of the Barwa to put the roof on for him. The *skumu* may also prepare pitfalls for catching game, but cannot engage in any other type of hunting or do any fishing. Digging a grave is prohibited, for, as we shall see, everything pertaining to death must be ignored by the *skumu*. 624
[563]

Other rules affecting the daily life of the *skumu* may be roughly divided into three: those affecting his person, those having to do with his food, and social regulations.

One of the great points of observance in the first class of regulations is the importance of the *mantle*. The *skumu* must on no account be seen during daylight hours with an uncovered head. If he wishes relief from the cumbersome *mantle* he may take it off in the darkness of his house and put on an ordinary hat made of skins, and when night falls he may walk where he will bareheaded if he so desires. The skin hat, known as *luka*, may be made from two animals only, in the case of an *skumu*, one being the *antelope*, a species of antelope with light-coloured hair, and the other the *beaver*, an animal resembling a beaver. The skin of the *antelope* may be used by anyone, but the *beaver* is reserved for the *skumu* only with one exception. The skin of the *beaver* may also be used for the carrying strap for infants known as *spuma*, which is worn over one shoulder in bandolier fashion. For the *skumu* the skin of the *beaver* is limited to the informal hat, *luka*, and for making into the *Adase*, a pouch used for carrying small objects and worn like a sporan. As a corollary to the importance of the *mantle* may be noted the importance attached to the head of the *skumu*, which must never be seen uncovered in daylight. 624
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[324]
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The Boonginda *skumu* never wash in the daytime, but may wash at night with hot water. The inland *skumu* never wash. Even the Boonginda *skumu* never wash their heads, and no *skumu* ever cuts his hair. If the *skumu* becomes too greatly inconvenienced, one of his wives may delouse his head, but only within the privacy of the house, by the light that enters the rear opening. 624
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